



npr-a update

Issue 4 December 1997

Tusaayugaagaksraq itqannaiyagnigniksranagun taimanigu
National Petroleum Reserve-gum Alaska-mi
News about planning for the future of the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska

**NPRA
Planning
Team BLM**

**222 West 7th
Ave., #13**

**Anchorage,
AK 99513**

Editor
Edward Bovy

**Design
Susan
Steinacher**

[Draft EIS out for comment](#)

[Summary of Alternatives](#)

[Subsistence workshop raises North Slope
concerns](#)

[At the sidebar:](#)

Key dates coming up
Community meetings
Open houses
Public hearings

To read the EIS

A complete copy can be found on the [NPR-A home page](#). Paper copies will be sent to libraries and BLM offices throughout the state.

For more information

or to request either a complete copy of the EIS or a Summary, stop by a BLM office or contact Jim Ducker at: *phone*: 9072713369 or *email*: jducker@ak.blm.gov *Internet*: see page 1 Or attend one of the open houses listed on page 2.

To comment on the EIS:

internet: [use the forms found here](#).

mail: use address shown in the left column of this page. Or attend one of the formal hearings.

In the next issue:

The next issue of the *NPRA Update* is scheduled for March. It will report on the comments received on the Draft EIS and let you know when the Final EIS will be available.

Past issues

[Issue 3](#)

[Issue 2](#)





Public's comments needed by February 10

Draft EIS out for comment

The muchanticipated Draft Integrated Activity Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (IAP/EIS) for the northeast corner of the National Petroleum ReserveAlaska will be mailed directly from the printer in early December to those who requested copies. Copies will also be placed in many libraries throughout Alaska and in all BLMAlaska offices. "The IAP/EIS contains 750 pages of text, 94 maps and nine appendices," says project manager Gene TerLand. For those who want to begin reading right away, [BLM has made the entire document available on the Internet.](#)

BLM is also sending copies of a special 60page Sumnrary to those on the NPRA mailing list who did not wish to receive the entire document. Summaries will be mailed by BLM during the week of December 8 and both documents will be available at a series of open house information meetings in December.

The Draft EIS outlines five different approaches to the future management of the northeast part of the NPRA. Options range from continuing current management including no oil and gas leasing, to designating special areas for resource protection and making the entire study area open for future leasing with protective stipulations.

"The Draft EIS is a product of highlytrained specialists from the federal, state and North Slope Borough governments working cooperatively to produce an objective assessment of the possibilities. Everyone is invited to take an interest in this document and provide us with their views on how this part of Alaska should be managed in the future," said BLMAlaska State Director Tom Allen.

BLM has planned a series of informal open houses to explain the Draft EIS and provide tips on how to read and comment effectively on it prior to holding a series of formal hearings to take testimony. The schedules for all **meetings and hearings are found at the [Sidebar](#)**.

[\[Contents\]](#) [\[Draft EIS\]](#) [\[Workshop\]](#) [\[Alternatives\]](#) [\[Sidebar\]](#)





npr-aupdate

Summary of Alternatives

The Draft EIS contains five alternatives and an analysis of the anticipated impacts. The Final EIS will have a proposed action based on public comments on the alternatives below.

Alternative A Continue current management activities, such as authorizing winter overland supply moves, scientific studies, and Special Recreation Permits for commercial guides.

No oil and gas lease sales

No new designations would be proposed

Two options, one allowing and one prohibiting seismic surveys
(Seismic is currently allowed.)

Alternative B

Continue current management activities

Make nearly 50% of planning area available for oil and gas lease sales

Recommends

- creating the Ikpikpok River Special Area
- adding Pik Dunes to Teshekpuk Lake Special Area
- designating the Colville River a "wild" Wild & Scenic River
- proposing a Bird Conservation Area

Alternative C

Continue current management activities

Make nearly 75% of planning area available for oil and gas lease sales

Recommends

- creating the Ikpihpuk River Special Area
- adding Pik Dunes to Teshekpuk Lake Special Area
- designating the Colville River a "scenic" Wild & Scenic River
- proposing a Bird Conservation Area

Alternative D

Continue current management activities

Make nearly 90% of planning area available for oil and gas lease sales

Recommends

- creating the Ikpihpuk River Special Area
- adding Pik Dunes to Teshekpuk Lake Special Area
- designating the Colville River a "recreation" Wild & Scenic River
- proposing a Bird Conservation Area

Alternative E

Continue current management activities

Make all of planning area available for oil and gas lease sales

Recommends

- creating the Ikpihpuk River Special Area
- adding Pik Dunes to Teshekpuk Lake Special Area
- proposing a Bird Conservation Area.

The Draft EIS contains 82 stipulations that would guide all future actions in the planning area. Some of the stipulations apply to all management alternatives and others apply only to selected alternatives. The stipulations are listed in the Draft EIS; an abbreviated list is found in the *Summary*.

[\[Contents\]](#) [\[Draft EIS\]](#) [\[Workshop\]](#) [\[Alternatives\]](#) [\[Sidebar\]](#)





Subsistence workshop raises North Slope concerns

One of the most critical concerns expressed by North Slope residents during the EIS "scoping" phase dealt with subsistence. The Inupiaq people rely on access to traditional sites and the availability of fish and wildlife resources to provide for their food, clothing and handicrafts and preserve their cultural heritage. In Nuiqsut, Rosemary Ahtuanguaruak explained that her lunch that day consisted entirely of wild game, saying "I can survive without a job to feed my family of 10 by the giving of these animals. We need to continue our traditional lifestyle to survive in this



The August subsistence workshop in Nuiqsut led to many recommendations for the IAP/EIS team.

land."

Many people on the North Slope also acknowledge that communities have benefited from past resource development that has given them modern facilities and technologies, despite the region's remoteness. Elder Warren Matumeak summed up his testimony in Barrow, speaking in Inupiaq through an interpreter, "The benefits to be realized are many, including the flow of money into the economy by the creation of jobs. We have learned that we can live both ways, having development on one hand and maintaining our subsistence lifestyle at the same time."

The BLM's challenge is to ensure that if a leasing program is conducted in the planning area, that it balance the benefits of resource development with protection of subsistence resources and access. In August, the BLM convened a working group of technical specialists and North Slope representatives to listen to community concerns and develop recommendations to protect subsistence users and uses in the planning area. The panel worked for a day and a half in Nuiqsut, with community meetings held during the evenings in Nuiqsut and Barrow. Workshop planners chose Nuiqsut as an appropriate location to meet because if oil leasing does occur, Nuiqsut would likely be most affected.

After brainstorming sessions and sharing information with Nuiqsut community members, the working group developed 10 final recommendations. These included the creation of a subsistence advisory panel to advise the BLM on responsible development in the planning area and involving local communities and agencies in development decisionmaking. Another recommendation involved the implementation of a coordinated monitoring program to document subsistence harvest levels and user patterns, resource population status and distribution, and any changes that occur through time in relation to exploration and development activities. Other recommendations were formulated into stipulations that ensure people retain access to their traditional subsistence sites and create an orientation program to educate leasees with local customary practices. The BLM considered the working group's recommendations in light of legal and administrative constraints, and incorporated recommendations or modifications into the Draft EIS.

Copies of the workshop proceedings and transcripts can be obtained by contacting Anne Morkill, BLM Northern District Office, 1150 University Avenue, Fairbanks, AK 99709 or call tollfree at 1-800-437-7021. The proceedings are included as an appendix to the Draft IAP/EIS and also are available on the Internet home page (address at left).

-Anne Morkill

[\[Contents\]](#) [\[Draft EIS\]](#) [\[Workshop\]](#) [\[Alternatives\]](#) [\[Sidebar\]](#)



npr-aupdate

Key dates coming up

November 24, 1997 Draft environmental impact statement (EIS) released on the Internet.

December 4, 1997 DEIS distributed by mail.

December 12, 1997 Comment period opens.

December 1997 Public information meetings on how to comment on draft EIS begin. See schedule on page 2.

January 1998 Formal hearings to obtain public comment and testimony. See schedule on page 3.

February 10, 1998 Comment period closes.

June 1998 Final EIS published.

July 1998 Final record of decision document released.

Community meetings

BLM is also meeting with residents of Anukluvuk Pass and Wainwright to discuss the planning effort. Leaders of the villages requested the meetings.

The Anukluvuk Pass meeting was held on November 12.

The Wainwright meeting is currently scheduled for December 11 at the Robert James Community Center at 2 pm and 6 pm.

For more information, contact Anne MorkiII at 4742340 or 18004377021 .

Open houses

BLM staff will be available to answer general questions and explain the Dratt EIS and how to comment on it at the following informal meetings to be held at:

Atqasuk Community Hall December 8, 2 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Barrow - Piuraagvik Recreation Center Gymnasium December 9, 2 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Nuiqsut - Kisik Community Center December 10, 2 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Fairbanks - BLM Northern District Office 1150 University Ave. December 15, 4 p.m.

Anchorage - Campbell Creek Science Center 6881 Abbott Loop Road December 16, 2 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Public hearings

BLM will hold meetings at the following locations to obtain formal public testimony and comments on the Draft EIS. Translators will be available at Anaktuvuk Pass, Atqasuk, Barrow and Nuiqsut.

Anaktuvuk Pass Community Hall January 15, 7 30 p.m.

Atqasuk Community Hall January 12, 7:30 p.m.

Barrow North Slope Borough Assembly Chambers January 13, 7:30 p.m.

Nuiqsut Kisik Community Center January 14, 7:30 p.m.

Anchorage Loussac Library Marston Theater 3600 Denali January 21, 3p.m.* and 7 p.m.*

Fairbanks Carlson Center Conference Room 2010 Second Avenue January 22, 3 p.m.* and 7 p.m..

Washington, D. C. Main Interior Building 1849 C Street January 26, time and room TBA

*Hearings in Anchorage and Fairbanks will be preceded by an open house one hour before the start of the hearings. Specialists will be available to answer questions and help you beginning at 2 p.m. and 6 p.m.

[\[Contents\]](#) [\[Draft EIS\]](#) [\[Workshop\]](#) [\[Alternatives\]](#) [\[Sidebar\]](#)